

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1 and 3-51 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 44, and 51 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 3, 5, and 14 are sought to be amended herein. Claim 2 is sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe that these amendments place the present application in condition for allowance and, as such, should be permitted after the final rejection. Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 8-9 and 17-43 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hemphill *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,197,184) (Office Action, page 2). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In the interest of advancing the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the features of claim 2, which the Examiner has indicated is allowable. Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as amended, claims 8-9 and 17-43 which depend therefrom, are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 2-7 and 10-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form (Office Action, page 6). Claim 2 has been incorporated into claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 should be in condition for allowance. Claims 3-7 and 10-16 depend either directly or indirectly from and add further limitations to claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3-7 and 10-16 should be in condition for allowance without further amendment.

Claims 44-51 have been allowed.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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